# East Haddam Planning and Zoning Commission
# Land Use Office

**Regular Meeting Minutes**
**May 12, 2026**

1) CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Brownell called the meeting to order at 7:15 pm.

2) COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Crary Brownell (Chairman), Richard Pettinelli, Bernard Gillis, Susan Kinsman, Maureen Pierson, Deborah Langdon, D. Duncan Orr, and Gary Turenne. Mr. Brownell appointed D. Duncan Orr to fill in for James Curtin as a voting member until his arrival at 7:20 pm.

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT: Eric Chamberland

OTHERS PRESENT: James Ventres LUA

3) MINUTES – Correction to the Commissioners Present – Mr. Brownell appointed Gary Turenne to fill in for Ms. Langdon as a voting member.

Mr. Brownell instructed the April 28, 2026, minutes to be filed as amended.

4) BILLS – No bills

5) HOME OCCUPATIONS

Application #26-04 84 Falls Rd, Map 65, Lot 099, John Gagnon, property owner. Online only kitchenware retail shop.

**The application was tabled since we did not receive the certificates of mailing.**

Application #26-06 118 Clark Gates Rd, Map 75, Lott 011, Lora Abbott. Mobile veterinary services.

Mr. Ventres confirmed that the use would involve no client visits to the residence and would operate entirely off-site.

**Mr. Gillis made a motion to approve the application. Seconded by Ms. Kinsman and unanimously approved.**

6) LOT LINE AMENDMENT

Application #26-07 30 Babcock Rd, Map 13, Lot 015, D. Wylie Peckham, lot line amendment in the R2 Zone.

Mr. Ventres shared that the proposal involved modifying lot boundaries to provide pond access to an existing residence while maintaining access to a larger adjacent parcel. After discussion and clarification of mapping and survey procedures, the Commission determined that the amendment would not create adverse impacts.

**Mr. Curtin made a motion to approve the application. Seconded by Mr. Pettinelli and the motion carried unanimously.**

7) PUBLIC HEARING

Mr. Brownell called the Public Hearing to order at 7:45 pm.

Mr. Pettinelli read the application as follows:

Application #26-1 44 WM F Palmer Rd, Map 65, lot 138, East Haddam Fire Department, construction for new firehouse and demolition of the existing building. CGS 8-24 Review – Public Improvement.

Mr. Ventres read a letter from the Fire House Building Committee Chairman, Craig Mansfield, requesting a continuance to the May 26, 2026 meeting.

**Mr. Pettinelli made a motion to continue the Public Hearing on May 26, 2026. Mr. Curtin seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

8) DISCUSSION

**A. Housing Bill 8002 Review**

Mr. Ventres discussed housing trends and regional planning efforts. A recently distributed report highlighted changing demographics, including an aging population and decreasing household sizes. The Commission discussed the Town's option to participate in a regional housing plan or develop its own, noting the administrative implications of each approach. Members also discussed recent and proposed state housing legislation and expressed concern regarding potential impacts on local zoning authority.

**B. Moodus Village Master Plan – Regulation Review**

The Commission continued its review of the Moodus Master Plan and reaffirmed its preference for a three-district framework consisting of Moodus Village, the Commercial Center, and Plains Road. The Commission reviewed permitted uses within each district and made several determinations.

It was agreed that greenhouses and nurseries would not be appropriate within the Commercial Center or along Plains Road but may be considered in other portions of the village by special exception. The Commission determined that drive-through uses would not be permitted on Plains Road and discussed the need to revise existing language referencing "state highways" to better reflect roadway classifications based on traffic function.

Restaurants were supported as special exception uses in appropriate districts, while breweries and brew pubs would be limited to the Commercial Center. Bed and Breakfast establishments and Country Inns were considered compatible lower-intensity uses and may be allowed by special exception across districts.

The Commission identified the need to refine retail use categories to provide clearer distinctions among types of retail activity. Additionally, it was agreed that lumber sales should be limited to smaller-scale or specialty operations. Other uses, including self-storage, light industrial, theaters, and professional offices, were reviewed and generally retained with adjustments to ensure consistency with the Town's development goals, including maintaining a walkable village center and preserving the historic character of Plains Road.

**C. Limited Car Sales in the IG-1 zone.**

The Commission discussed a potential zoning amendment to allow limited automobile sales and repair within the industrial incubator units on Commerce Drive. Members expressed varying perspectives and agreed that Mr. Ventres should prepare draft regulatory language for further review prior to initiating any formal amendment process

9) LAND USE ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

There was a brief discussion regarding wetlands mitigation concepts.

10) ADJOURNMENT

**A motion was made by Mr. Curtin to adjourn at 8:46 pm. The motion was seconded by Mr. Pettinelli and was unanimously approved**.

Respectfully submitted,
Lori Olson
Recording Secretary